

Maryland State Police Press Release

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TROOPERS PREPARED FOR STORM RESPONSE

(PIKESVILLE, MD) -- In coordination with the Maryland Emergency Management Agency and local emergency officials, Maryland State Police personnel are prepared to respond when and where they will be needed during and after the impending storm.

Maryland State Police Superintendent Colonel Marcus Brown has ordered all troopers within the Field Operations and Special Operations bureaus to be prepared for deployment to areas of need throughout the state. These bureaus include the road patrol force, as well as specialized teams such as the Underwater Recovery Team, the Aviation Command, and the Special Operations Division. Troopers not normally assigned to road patrol duties have been notified of possible patrol assignments if needed. All troopers are subject to immediate recall to duty if needed.

All barrack commanders have ensured four-wheel drive vehicles are available for use. They have tested their barrack generators and ensured they are operational in the event of a power failure. Troopers have replenished their supply of road flares and other equipment needed for storm response. Troopers in Western Maryland are prepared for a cold weather response should the storm cause snow in that region.

Barrack commanders will also be ready to assign a trooper to each local emergency operation center that opens, in order to provide state assistance if needed. State Police command staff will also be present at the Maryland Emergency Management Agency Statewide Operations Center to coordinate response efforts there in cooperation with other state agencies.

In the event of power failures, motorists are reminded of Maryland's new law concerning non-functioning traffic lights. The law requires all drivers approaching an intersection with a non-functioning traffic signal to stop. Drivers may proceed only after they have yielded to any vehicles or pedestrians already in the intersection. They must remain stopped until the intersection is clear and it is safe to proceed.

Predictions indicate there is a high risk for flooded roads and downed trees as a result of the pending storm. Drivers are urged to be alert for unexpected hazards, such as trees across roadways or downed power lines. Drivers should reduce speeds in order to reduce the risks of hydroplaning. Drivers should not attempt to drive through standing water. Motorists are reminded that Maryland law requires headlights to be on whenever wipers are activated.

For the latest statewide emergency information, citizens are urged to visit the Maryland Emergency Management Agency website at www.mema.state.md.us. Up to the minute statewide traffic information, including the locations of roads that may be closed due to flooding, is available on-line at www.511md.org, or by calling 511. Road conditions and views of live traffic cameras are also available on the State Highway Administration website at www.roads.maryland.gov. Citizens are urged not to call Maryland State Police barracks simply to check on road conditions. Calls to police or 911 centers during the storm should be for

emergency situations only.

The State Police Aviation Command helicopter fleet will be ready to fly as soon as weather permits. State Police helicopter crews have conducted extra hoist rescue training in recent weeks, which included training with the Los Angeles Fire Department. If aerial rescues are needed, State Police helicopter crews will be ready to respond.

Engineers and inspectors from the Office of the State Fire Marshal are on standby to assist with building inspections if needed. Deputy state fire marshals are also on alert and will be dispatched through MEMA if needed.

Colonel Brown urges citizens to heed the Governor's advice and the instructions of local emergency officials. That advice includes staying off the roads during the storm and not driving into flooded roadways and risk being stranded.

"Use common sense," Colonel Brown said. "Do not go out unnecessarily and risk creating an emergency rescue situation. The men and women of the Maryland State Police will be on patrol and ready to respond in coordination with our state and local partners."

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